

REMARKS

In accordance with the Office Action of September 14, 2006, Claims 3-10 are pending and Claims 3-10 stand rejected. Claims 1 and 2 were previously canceled.

More specifically, Claims 3-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Claims 3-5 and 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as indefinite. Claims 4-5 and 7-8, which depend from claim 3, are similarly rejected as indefinite. Claims 4 and 7 are also separately rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as indefinite. Claims 3, 6 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by US Patent No. 5,882,122 to Noguchi et al. (hereinafter "Noguchi"). Claims 5 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Noguchi in view of US Patent No. 4,078,287 to Kupchick et al. (hereinafter "Kupchick") and US Patent No. 4,054,334 to McAllister et al. (hereinafter "McAllister"). Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Noguchi in view of US Patent No. 5,529,404 to Robinson et al. (hereinafter "Robinson").

In response, Applicant has amended claims 3, 6 and 9 to address all of the foregoing rejections. Applicant has also amended the specification. No new matter has been added. In view of the amendments to the claims and specification, and the remarks below, Applicant believes that Claims 3-10 are patentable over the prior art of record and in condition for allowance.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph and second paragraph

Applicant has amended claim 3 to recite in detail a method of manufacturing a pivot assembly having the following steps: mating a first ball bearing at each to a lower end of a shaft; disposing a spacer between an outer ring of the first ball bearing and one an upper end of the shaft; fixing a seal member to cover an outer end face of the ball bearing; imparting a pre-load pressure to the inner ring by applying pressure on the seal member; and mating a second ball bearing to an upper end of the shaft so that the spacer contacts the outer rings of the bearings; mating a seal member to the upper end of the shaft to cover an outer end face of the second ball bearing; imparting a pre-load pressure to the inner ring of the second ball bearing by applying pressure on the seal member; and fixing the seal member to an outer circumference of the shaft. Applicant has also amended claim 6 to recite a method of manufacturing a pivot assembly having the following steps: mating a first ball bearing at each to a lower end of a shaft; disposing a spacer between an

outer ring of the first ball bearing and one an upper end of the shaft; fixing a seal member to cover an outer end face of the ball bearing; imparting a pre-load pressure to the inner ring by applying pressure on the seal member; and mating a second ball bearing to an upper end of the shaft so that the spacer contacts the outer rings of the bearings; mating a seal member to the upper end of the shaft to cover an outer end face of the second ball bearing; imparting a pre-load pressure to the inner ring of the second ball bearing by applying pressure on the seal member; and fixing the seal member to an outer circumference of the shaft.

Each of the steps of the claimed methods is described in Applicants application, including in, for example. paragraph 43, which recites "The above-mentioned kind of pivot assembly is manufactured in the following way. First, an adhesive is applied to the outer circumference of the lower end of a shaft 1, and a ball bearing 2 is mated thereto. Meanwhile, an adhesive is applied to the inner [as amended] circumference of the upper end of a sleeve 3, and a ball bearing 2 is mated thereto. And an adhesive is applied to the outer circumference of the upper end of a shaft 1 and the inner circumference of the lower end of a sleeve 3 and the sleeve 3 is mated to the shaft 1. Next, a hub cap 4 is mated to the upper end part of a shaft 1 and the end surface thereof is caused to contact the inner ring 21 of the ball bearing 2. And, the hub cap 4 is pressed and pre-load is applied." It is respectfully submitted that claims 3 and 6 as amended overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph and second paragraph. Similarly, the objections to the claims dependent on 3 and 6 have been overcome.

Rejections under 35 USC 102(a) and 103(a)

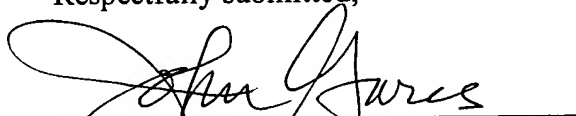
Applicant submits that in light of the amendments to claims 3 and 6 the rejection based on Noguchi is rendered moot. Noguchi fails to disclose all the claimed elements as now recited in amended claims 3 and 6, including the sequence of mating the ball bearings and the sleeve or the spacer. Accordingly, claims 3 and 6 are not anticipated by Noguchi. Similarly, claim 9 has been amended to require that the pressing member is a single piece composed of an axis and a coaxial cylinder part and that the supporting means has a central hole that mates with the shaft to align the shaft to the axis. Neither of these claimed structural features are disclosed by Noguchi. Accordingly, claim 9 is not anticipated by Noguchi.

With respect to the rejection of the claims under 35 USC 103(a), Applicant submits that neither Kupchick nor McAllister remedy the deficiencies of Noguchi. That is, Noguchi in combination with Kupchick or McAllister do not disclose or suggest all the elements of claims 3

and 6 as amended. Accordingly, claims dependent on claims 3 and 6 are not rendered obvious by the combination of those references. Similarly, Robinson does not teach, as required by claim 9, the pressing member as a single piece composed of an axis and a coaxial cylinder part and that the supporting means has a central hole that mates with the shaft to align the shaft to the axis. Accordingly, claim 10, which depends from claim 9, is not obvious over Noguchi in view of Robinson.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that Claims 3-10 are patentable over the prior art of record and in condition for allowance. The Examiner is urged to telephone Applicant's undersigned counsel at the number noted below if it will advance the prosecution of this application, or with any suggestion to resolve any condition that would impede allowance. In the event that any extension of time is required, Applicant petitions for that extension of time required to make this response timely. Kindly charge any additional fee, or credit any surplus, to Deposit Account No. 50-0675, Order No. 051319-55.

Respectfully submitted,



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